

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the Suspension or)	
)	CONSENT ORDER OF
Revocation of the Educator Certificate of)	
)	SUSPENSION
Sandra Lee Thompson)	
)	
Certificate 162742)	

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The South Carolina State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on February 8, 2006. On November 29, 2005, the South Carolina Department of Education (Department) sent Sandra Lee Thompson a notice of her right to a hearing before the State Board concerning the possible suspension of her South Carolina educator certificate 162742 by regular mail and certified mail, return receipt, restricted delivery. Ms. Thompson received the notice and subsequently agreed through her attorney to waive her right to a hearing and to accept the suspension of her certificate for a period that would commence retroactively on October 28, 2005, through April 28, 2006. After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to order the suspension of Ms. Thompson's certificate for the agreed upon period.

Sandra L
Thompson

SLT
Initial Her

1-19-06
Date

FINDINGS OF FACT

Ms. Thompson holds an expired South Carolina certificate and last taught in South Carolina in 1993. Ms. Thompson also holds a Georgia educator certificate and, during the 2004-05 school year, Ms. Thompson was employed to teach fourth grade in an elementary school in Georgia. On October 13, 2005, the Georgia Professional Standards Commission suspended Ms. Thompson's Georgia certificate from October 28, 2005, until April 28, 2006, following allegations that Ms. Thompson provided inappropriate assistance to students during the administration of the Georgia Criterion-Referenced Competency Test.

(SEE ATTACHMENT FOR MS. THOMPSON'S RESPONSE)

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

"The State Board of Education may, for just cause, either revoke or suspend the certificate of any person." S.C. Code Ann. §59-25-150 (2004), S.C. Code Ann. §59-25-160 (2004); 24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-58. Just cause includes unprofessional conduct. S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (2004). The State Board finds that the information presented supports its determination that just cause exists to suspend Ms. Thompson's certificate 162742, commencing retroactively on October 28, 2005, through April 28, 2006. If Ms. Thompson wishes to have her certificate reinstated at the end of the suspension period, Ms. Thompson may make a written request to the Office of Educator Certification of the Department and meet all current certification requirements.

South Carolina State Board of Education

By: 

Joe Isaac

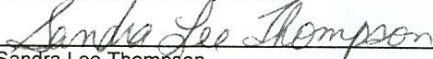
Chair

Columbia, South Carolina

February 8, 2006

plus attachments

I, Sandra Lee Thompson, S.C. Educator Certificate 173881 do hereby agree to the proposed Consent Order of Suspension, consisting of two pages, and understand that this Order will be presented to the State Board of Education for approval on February 8, 2006.


Sandra Lee Thompson

1-19-06
Date

(ATTACHMENT)

Ms. Thompson states in response that she understands that this suspension in South Carolina is due solely to the fact that she entered a consent order in 2005 concerning her Georgia educator certification. With that in mind, Ms. Thompson hereby attaches a copy of the Georgia consent order so that there can be no misunderstanding as to the circumstance which led to the Georgia consent order.

Ms. Thompson further states that it makes little sense to suspend her South Carolina certification for a short term when that certification itself expired some 10 years ago. Ms. Thompson understands from discussions between her attorney and counsel for the South Carolina State Board of Education that the State Board is seeking this suspension so as to prevent Ms. Thompson "from reactivating the expired (South Carolina) certificate during the period of certificate suspension (in Georgia)."

Ms. Thompson hereby states that she has no intention of reactivating her South Carolina certification during the few months remaining in her suspension in Georgia. However, in the interest of avoiding the time, trouble, and expense of a certification hearing in South Carolina, Ms. Thompson agrees to this Consent Order of Suspension.

Sandra Lee Thompson
Sandra Lee Thompson

BEFORE THE GEORGIA PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS COMMISSION
STATE OF GEORGIA

OCT 13 2005

Professional Standards Comm.

IN THE MATTER OF:

SANDRA THOMPSON,
Certificate #257-13-6730
Respondent.

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*

PSC Case No. 05-5-1708

CONSENT ORDER

By agreement of the Georgia Professional Standards Commission ("Commission") and Sandra Thompson ("Educator"), the following disposition of this matter is entered pursuant to the provisions of O.C.G.A. §50-13-13(a)(4).

FINDINGS OF FACT

1.

The Educator holds a certificate to teach in the State of Georgia, and has held such certificate at all times relevant to the matters asserted herein.

2.

The Educator allegedly erased and changed answers on students' answer sheets and advised some students of answers. It was alleged that two different proctors witnessed the Educator involved in inappropriate test administration and that some students confirmed the allegations. The Educator also completed the check-off

sheets declaring that the proctors did not see any problems with the administration of the test.

3.

In response, the Educator states that the statements of eight out of eleven students questioned after the test clearly show that the Educator did nothing wrong. The statements of two students that the Educator changed answers on their test answer sheets are contradicted by the proctor, who stated that the Educator said to both students, "I'm not changing your answers; I'm just showing you how to mark them correctly."

4.

The Educator further shows that a proctor who claims that she saw the Educator actually change answers on a student's answer sheet is, in fact, contradicted by the student himself who says instead that the Educator "erased two or three answers and bubbled them back to show him how to bubble." In other words, the Educator changed none of his answers.

5.

As to the Educator's completing the proctor checklists she admits that she did so inadvertently, in haste, and by mistake. She has admitted doing so. In further response, she shows that she completed the checklists in pencil, that the proctors were free to make any changes, and that each proctor signed her respective checklist.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Under O.C.G.A. Title 20, Chapter 2, the Commission has the authority to take action against the certificate of the Educator. The Educator waives any further conclusion of law with respect to this matter.

ORDER

The Georgia Professional Standards Commission, having considered the particular facts and circumstances of this case hereby orders, and the Educator hereby agrees to the following

1.

The Educator's certificate as an educator in the state of Georgia shall be suspended for six months beginning on Oct. 28, 2005 and continuing through April 28, 2006. During the period of suspension, the Educator shall not teach in a public school in the State of Georgia nor be employed as a paraprofessional, aide, or substitute teacher in a public school in the State of Georgia.

In the future, any allegations concerning violation of the Rules of the Professional Standards Commission will be thoroughly investigated and may result in a sanction being imposed against the Educator's educator certificate.

2.

Approval of this Consent Order by the Georgia Professiona

Standards Commission shall in no way be construed as condoning the Educator's conduct and shall not be construed as a waiver of any of the lawful rights possessed by the Commission.

3.

The Educator acknowledges that she has read this Consent Order and that she understands its contents. The Educator understands that she has a right to a hearing in this matter, and the Educator freely, knowingly, and voluntarily waives such right by entering into this Consent Order upon its acceptance by the Commission. The Educator understands that this Consent Order will not become effective unless and until approved by the Commission.

The Educator further understands and agrees that the Commission shall have the authority to review the investigative file and all relevant evidence in considering this Consent Order.

The Educator further understands that this Consent Order, once approved, shall constitute a public record that may be disseminated as a disciplinary action of the Commission.

If this Consent Order is not approved, it shall not constitute an admission against interest against either party in this proceeding or prejudice the ability of the Commission to adjudicate this matter. The Educator hereby consents to the terms and sanctions contained herein.

CONSENTED TO:


SANDRA THOMPSON
Educator

Sworn and subscribed before me this
19th day of September, 2005.

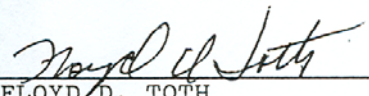
James D. A. Muns
Notary Public
My Commission Expires: 25 August 2007

Approved by the Commission this 13th day of Oct., 2005

GEORGIA PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS COMMISSION

BY: 

LEE MUNS
VICE CHAIRMAN

ATTEST: 

FLOYD D. TOTH
Executive Secretary